



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO KOREA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA,

SOLOMON ISLANDS AND THAILAND

(MAY 2-11, 1984) FAREWELL CEREMONY ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea)

Thursday, 10 May 1984

Dear Friends,

This brief stay in Papua New Guinea has given me great joy. During these days, I have had the wonderful experience of being with the Church in this beloved country, surrounded by the lively affection of its *generous and hospitable people*. I bid you all farewell with deep emotion and sincere gratitude.

1. I wish to say a particular word of thanks to all those who have made this pastoral visit possible: first of all, to his Excellency *the Governor-General, to the Prime Minister* and all the distinguished members of the Government. I am also grateful to all those who have prepared and organized so well the various parts of my stay here. A special thank-you goes to my venerable *Brothers in the Episcopate*, and to the clergy, religious and laity, for all that they have done in their dioceses to prepare spiritually for this historic occasion.

2. The varied personal contacts which this visit has afforded me have been very pleasant and enriching. They have enable me to see the life and vitality of *this young and promising nation*. And I have witnessed how the Catholic faith has taken deep root in this land, and begun to bear fruit in generous measure. As I met the clergy and religious, the catechists and members of Christian families, and especially the young people and the sick, I could see great hope for *the future of the Church* in Papua New Guinea, a hope which the Holy Spirit can bring to fulfilment. I know, too, that by this pastoral visit, the bond of ecclesial communion which links the Bishop of Rome with the local Churches in this land has been confirmed and strengthened. For these many blessings, may the name of the Lord be praised for ever! Praised be Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Saviour of the world!

3. As I leave your country, I wish to assure you that I shall never forget you. You have a permanent place in my heart and I shall pray for you always. I ask our eternal Father to watch over you and *keep you in his love*, and I pray that his blessings will be extended to those whom I could not meet, to all those who live in the coastal and mountain regions, and in the most distant parts of this nation.

May God bless you with peace and joy!

God bless Papua New Guinea!

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